

## **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPLIES FLOW INTO HURRICANE-HIT AREAS**

**WASHINGTON** --In coordination with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, FEMA is providing mass care to disaster victims at shelters and medical units across the Gulf Region and distributing vital medications and supplies, tetanus vaccines, and maintenance medications for diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, anxiety and other conditions, Michael D. Brown, Department of Homeland Security's Principal Federal Official for Hurricane Katrina response and head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today.

“Life saving and life sustaining missions continue to be the top priorities in the Hurricane Katrina response and recovery,” said Brown. “Medical care and medications are crucial for the victims of this disaster and we are working to get these resources to all those in need.”

To date:

- In Louisiana, there are 30 Disaster Medical Teams (DMAT); 2 Veterinary Assistance Teams (VMAT); 1 Mental Health Team; and 4 Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams (DMORT)
- In Mississippi, there are 11 DMATs; 1 Mental Health Team; 2 VMATs; and 4 DMORTS
- There have been 9,400 hospital evacuations and all hospitals as well as 30 nursing homes in New Orleans have been evacuated
- A portable hospital from Nevada arrived at New Orleans airport yesterday
- The 1,000-bed USS Comfort is scheduled to arrive in the Gulf Coast area tomorrow
- A Department of Defense mobile hospital is operational at the New Orleans airport
- DMORT sites are set up in Gabriel, La., and Gulfport, Miss. Each site has four DMORT teams and one portable morgue.
- As of yesterday, 229,328 people were in 679 shelters in 12 states
- Two million meals ready to eat (MREs) were delivered to Gulfport, Miss., last night, making a total of 8.5 million MREs that have been delivered in response to Hurricane Katrina
- FEMA is working with the American Red Cross to provide vouchers to evacuees in shelters
- Three Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs), where hurricane victims can get assistance, are opening in Alabama today making a total of five there; four DRCs are open in Texas
- Disaster food stamps are available in Louisiana
- More states are preparing to receive Hurricane Katrina evacuees – 15 states and the District of Columbia are currently housing or preparing to house evacuees
- 1.1 million barrels of diesel have been shipped to New Orleans

Affected individuals in declared counties can register online for disaster assistance at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) or call FEMA's toll-free registration line 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) - TTY 800-462-7585, hours. Victims are encouraged to register on-line due to the possibility of high call volume. If registering by phone, owners of commercial properties and residents with only minor losses are urged to wait a few days before calling so those whose homes were destroyed or heavily damaged can be served first. Phone lines are open 24-hours, 7 days a week.

FEMA prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, trains first responders, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.